annual valuation of Pension Fund. Based on valuation results as also the availability of resources relief is granted to the pensioners, in addition to the minimum pension payable. Till date, four additional reliefs have been granted under the scheme.

Efficient, Corruption-free Government Machinery

2731. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state the details of the steps taken or proposed to be taken for making Government's administrative machinery free from inefficiency, corruption and lethargy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): It has been the continuing endeavour of the Government to check irregularities and malpractices in Government Departments. Policies in this regard have been formulated and are continuously monitored and modified in order to make them more effective and responsive to the needs of the changing environment. In the Government, the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions acts as a Nodal Agency and coordinates the efforts of the Ministries/Departments in the fields of vigilance and anti-corruption activities of various agencies involved in the task. The Annual Action Plan prepared by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions envisages a three-pronged strategy for combating corruption in public life. The broad features of the Action Plan are:

(i) Preventive vigilance;

(ii) Surveillance and detection; and

(iii) Deterrent punitive action.

For conferring a statutory status on Central Vigilance Commission, CVC Bill has been introduced in Parliament. After the Bill was reported by the Joint Parliament Committee, it is awaiting consideration and passing by the Parliament.

Lok Pal Bill, 2001 was introduced by the Government in the Lok

Sabha on 14.8.2001. After it was referred to the Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs for examination and report, the Standing Committee has presented its Report to the Speaker, Lok Sabha and Chairman, Rajya Sabha on 31.12.2001.

The Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, *inter alia*, provide that every Government servant shall at all times (i) maintain absolute integrity; (ii) maintain devotion to duty; and (iii) do nothing which is unbecoming of a Government servant. These provisions are intended to make the Government servants function efficiently. Similar provisions have also been made in the rules governing other Services. Violation of these Rules by the Government servants is dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Central Civil Services (Classification, Control & Appeal) Rules, 1965 etc.

The Government has also taken several steps in the recent past to improve the accountability and efficiency of the bureaucracy and also the quality of public service delivery. Some of these steps are as follows:

(i) Based on the recommendations of the Commission on Review of Administrative laws, set up by the Government in May, 1998 and which submitted its report in September, 1998, the Government has taken up simplification of laws, rules and procedures including repeal of irrelevant and dysfunctional laws with a view to improve service delivery and transparency in the functioning of the Government. 393 Acts, including five War-time Permanent Ordinances, have been repealed so far.

(ii) A large number of Ministries/Departments etc. with considerable public interface have introduced Citizen's Charters indicating broadly the quality of service the people would be entitled to within a specified time-frame. So far 68 Citizens' Charters have been formulated by various Ministries/Departments etc. Information and Facilitation or Help Counters have been set up by 75 Ministries/ Departments/Organizations to provide information and assistance to the public regarding procedures, programmes

and schemes of the concerned organizations as well as access to information pertaining to the status of individual cases.

(iii) The Freedom of Information Bill, 2000 has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 25 July, 2000.

(iv) Information Technology is being used in the functioning of the Government for improving administrative efficiency as well as hassle-free services to citizen.

Vacancies for Direct Recruitment

2732. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies earmarked for direct recruitment in the year 2000-2001 in Group A, B, C & D cadres in various departments of the Government of India;

(b) the number of vacancies that were filled up by direct recruitment during the year; and

(c) how many of the vacancies out of the above were abolished as per the directive by the Minister of Finance, Department of Expenditure (Group-wise)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The number of vacancies earmarked for Direct Recruitment in Group A,B,C and D cadres in various Departments of Union Government, the number of Direct Recruitment vacancies filled during the year and the number of posts abolished are not centrally maintained.

Figures are however, available of consolidated vacancies (for both Direct Recruitment as well as promotion) for the year 1999-2000.